United Nations ST/AI/2000/6

Secretariat

25 May 2000

Administrative instruction

Special entitlements for staff members serving at designated duty stations*

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, pursuant to section 4.2 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/1, and for the purpose of implementing staff regulation 3.2 (a) and (b), staff rules 103.20 (f) and (i), 105.3 (m), 107.21 (k), 203.8 (e) and (h), 205.2 (e), 207.20 (k), and of giving effect to the decisions of the International Civil Service Commission relating to special entitlements according to the difficulties of life and work, hereby promulgates the following:

I. General

Section 1
Conditions for special entitlements

1.1 Internationally recruited staff members serving at duty stations designated by the International Civil Service Commission as having difficult conditions of life and work shall be eligible for the special entitlements set out in parts II, III, IV and V of the present instruction, provided they meet the conditions applicable to each entitlement. All duty stations, and the special entitlements applicable to each one, are listed in an annual information circular on classification of duty stations and special entitlements for staff members serving at designated duty stations (hereunder referred to as "the circular"). The exceptional measures set out in section 12 of the present instruction shall apply to both internationally and locally recruited staff.

1.2 Duty stations where staff members are no longer serving and where it is not expected that they will do so in the near future are placed by the International Civil Service Commission on a "reserve list", which appears in annex IV to the circular. In the event staff members are again assigned to a duty station included in that reserve list, the special entitlements last approved for such duty station shall apply, pending a new determination by the International Civil Service Commission of the applicable special entitlements.

II. Special entitlements related to education grant

Section 2
General

2.1 Staff members eligible for the education grant under staff rules 103.20 and 203.8 who are serving at the duty stations indicated in the second column of annex II to the circular shall be eligible for the special entitlements set out in sections 3 and 4 of the present instruction when schools do not exist at the duty station to provide schooling in the language or cultural tradition desired by staff members for their children.

2.2 The present instruction shall be applied in conjunction with ST/AI/1999/4 on education grant and special education grant for disabled children.

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Section 3
Additional education grant travel

3.1 Pursuant to staff regulation 3.2 (a) and staff rules 103.20 (i) and 203.8 (h), and in accordance with section 8.3 of ST/AI/1999/4 on education grant and special education grant for disabled children, staff members who meet the conditions of section 8 of ST/AI/1999/4 shall be entitled to two round trips of education grant travel for their children in the year in which they are not entitled to home leave.

3.2 If a staff member serving at a duty station designated as giving rise to additional education grant travel chooses not to exercise his or her entitlement to home leave in the year in which he or she would be entitled to do so, two round trips of education grant travel may be granted in respect of his or her child or children for that year.

Section 4
Additional reimbursement for boarding costs

Under staff regulation 3.2 (b) and staff rules 103.20 (f) and 203.8 (e), staff members shall be entitled in respect of their children in school attendance at the primary and secondary levels to an additional amount of 100 per cent of boarding costs in addition to the amount of the normal grant, up to a maximum amount per year computed in accordance with section 4.3 of ST/AI/1999/4.

III. Accelerated home leave travel entitlement

Section 5
General

Staff members eligible for home leave under staff rules 105.3 and 205.2 who are serving at duty stations classified by the International Civil Service Commission in hardship categories C, D or E shall be granted, under staff rules 105.3 (m) and 205.2 (e), accelerated home leave travel once in every 12 months in accordance with the provisions of the present instruction. The hardship category of each duty station is indicated in the first column of annex II to the circular.

Section 6
Administration of the entitlement

6.1 The accelerated home leave entitlement shall be administered in accordance with a system whereby credit points are accrued for each month of service. Accrual shall be at the rate of two points for each month of service at duty stations with an accelerated home leave cycle.

6.2 When a staff member changes from a duty station with a normal home leave cycle to a duty station with an accelerated home leave cycle, credit points shall accrue at the rate of two points per month of service as from the effective date of transfer or assignment to the new duty station. Service credits accrued towards the home leave entitlement at the previous duty station shall be credited at the rate of one point for each month of service.

6.3 Accrual of credit points shall be on the basis of calendar months of service. Fractions of months of service shall be treated as follows:

(a) One to 15 days: no credit;

(b) More than 15 days: full credit.

6.4 The entitlement shall become due when 24 points have been accrued, provided that the staff member's service under the 100 or 200 series of the Staff Rules is expected to continue for at least six months beyond the date of return to duty or the date when the entitlement becomes due, whichever is later. When the entitlement is exercised, 24 points shall be debited.

6.5 The exercise of the entitlement may be advanced or deferred in accordance with the exigencies of the service and the personal circumstances and preferences of the individual staff member, subject to the following conditions:

(a) Advanced home leave may be granted only when at least 12 points have been accrued;

(b) In the case of deferred leave, no more than 32 points may be accumulated towards the entitlement. When this maximum has been reached, accrual shall start again on the first of the month in which the home leave travel is exercised;

(c) A minimum interval of three months is required between each travel on home leave or family visit, counting from the date of return to the duty

station from one travel to the date of departure on the next travel.

6.6 Every second entitlement must be exercised to the country of home leave. At the request of the staff member, the other leave entitlement may be exercised to a country other than that of home leave, provided that a period of not less than two calendar weeks, exclusive of travel time, is spent in that country. In such a case, the amount of travel expenses payable by the United Nations shall not exceed the cost of travel to the place of home leave. If the cost of the staff member's travel is more economical than travel to the place of home leave, the amount payable by the United Nations shall be limited to the actual travel expenses incurred, provided these do not exceed the approved standard of accommodation.

6.7 Except as otherwise provided in the present instruction, the provisions in staff rules 105.3, 205.2 and 207.11 relating to the regular home leave entitlement shall apply to the accelerated home leave travel entitlement.

IV. Special shipment entitlements

Section 7
General

7.1 Internationally recruited staff members serving at designated duty stations shall be eligible for special shipment entitlements under staff rules 107.21 (k) and 207.20 (k) and the provisions of the present instruction. The designated duty stations are:

(a) For the entitlements under sections 8 and 9 below, the duty stations indicated in the third column of annex II to the circular;

(b) For the entitlement under section 10 below, the duty stations classified in categories C, D and E in the first column of annex II to the circular.

7.2 Except as otherwise indicated in sections 8, 9 and 10 below, the relevant provisions of staff rules 107.21 and 207.20 and of ST/AI/1999/15 on excess baggage, shipments and insurance shall apply to the special shipment entitlements.

Section 8
Additional annual shipment entitlement

8.1 An additional annual shipment entitlement of 50 kilograms or 0.31 cubic metres under staff rules 107.21 (k) (i) and 207.20 (k) (i) may be granted to staff members in receipt of post adjustment at a designated duty station subject to the following conditions:

(a) The shipment is to the designated duty station;

(b) The entitlement is normally exercised in conjunction with home leave, but may be granted independently of such leave provided it is exercised in the calendar year in which home leave falls due;

(c) The entitlement shall not arise in connection with travel on reassignment or transfer to and from the designated duty station;

(d) Payment of the shipment expenses may not exceed the cost of shipment from the place of home leave to the duty station;

(e) The shipment is made by the most economical means, as determined by the Secretary-General, in accordance with section 9.1 of ST/AI/1999/15. When shipment by air is the most economical means, the entire additional shipment shall be made by air freight. When surface shipment is the most economical means, conversion to shipment by air may be made on the basis of one half the weight or volume of the surface entitlement, in accordance with section 9.2 (a) of ST/AI/1999/15. Exceptionally, conversion of the surface entitlement to shipment by air may be authorized on the basis of the full weight or volume in accordance with section 9.2 (b) (i) and (iii) of ST/AI/1999/15, when the Secretary-General determines that there is an extraordinary risk of damage to, or loss of, a surface shipment in transit, or when the normal shipping time would exceed three months. Such determination shall be made by reference to shipments from the home country to the duty station.

8.2 At the request of the staff member, the additional annual shipment entitlement provided by section 8.1 may be converted to an additional 10 kilograms of accompanied excess baggage.

Section 9
Shipment entitlement on birth or adoption of an infant

The additional 50-kilogram shipment entitlement under staff rules 107.21 (k) (ii) and 207.20 (k) (ii) in connection with the birth or adoption of an infant, whether at the duty station or away from the duty station, shall be granted subject to the following conditions:

(a) The entitlement shall be used solely for articles needed for the infant;

(b) When the child is born or adopted outside the duty station and travels to the duty station on home leave travel, the special 50-kilogram shipment entitlement shall be in addition to the unaccompanied shipment entitlement on home leave travel under staff rule 107.21 (g) (i) or 207.20 (h) (i).

Section 10
Special terms for the exercise of the shipment entitlement under staff rules 107.21 (g) (i) and 207.20 (h) (i)

At duty stations with a 12-month home leave cycle, staff members may exercise the unaccompanied shipment entitlement of 50 kilograms or 0.31 cubic metres relating to travel on home leave, family visit or education grant travel or the alternative entitlement to accompanied excess baggage so that, if the full entitlement is not used for one leg of the travel, the unused portion may be used to supplement the normal entitlement for the other leg of the travel.

V. Other special entitlements

Section 11
Reimbursement of basic medical examinations

11.1 Staff members assigned to a country listed in annex III to the annual information circular on classification of duty stations and special entitlements for staff members serving at designated duty stations shall be entitled to reimbursement of the cost of basic medical examinations and tests for themselves, and for their spouse and dependent children whose travel to the duty station has been paid by the United Nations, in accordance with the provisions of this section.

11.2 Staff members shall be entitled to reimbursement of the cost of one medical examination and related tests in any two-year period for themselves and their eligible family members. Reimbursement shall be within limits considered customary and reasonable at the duty station, and shall not exceed a maximum amount of $350 per person.

11.3 Reimbursement claims shall be submitted to the staff member's executive or administrative office, together with appropriate receipts specifying the examinations and tests taken.

11.4 The results of the examinations or tests shall not be reported to the Organization, unless the staff member so requests. In such case, the results shall be sent directly to the Medical Service.

Section 12
Exceptional measures

At duty stations where very hazardous conditions, such as war or active hostilities, prevail and where non-essential internationally recruited staff and family members of internationally recruited staff have been evacuated, the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission may authorize the application of exceptional measures such as hazard-duty pay or a special bonus to internationally recruited staff and locally recruited staff who remain at those duty stations and continue to report to work.

Section 13
Final provisions

13.1 The present instruction shall enter into force on 1 July 2000.

13.2 Administrative instructions ST/AI/280/Rev.6 of 30 April 1991, ST/AI/280/Rev.6/Amend.6 and Corr.1 of 12 February 1997 and 9 May 1997, respectively, ST/AI/317 of 5 June 1984 and ST/AI/317/Amend.8 of 24 February 1995 are hereby abolished.

(*Signed*) Joseph E. **Connor**
Under-Secretary-General for Management